



INDIAN AFFAIRS COUNCIL

RESOLUTION 09232026_01

**RESOLUTION HONORING INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL SURVIVORS,
DESCENDANTS, AND THOSE WHO NEVER RETURNED HOME**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MINNESOTA INDIAN AFFAIRS COUNCIL RECOGNIZING AND HONORING AMERICAN INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL SURVIVORS, THEIR FAMILIES AND DESCENDANTS, AND THE CHILDREN WHO NEVER RETURNED HOME

WHEREAS, the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (“MIAC”) was established to protect the sovereignty of Minnesota’s Tribal Nations and to promote the social, economic, cultural, and governmental well-being of American Indian people throughout Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, Tribal Nations are sovereign governments with inherent political, cultural, spiritual, and familial responsibilities to their citizens, communities, ancestors, and future generations; and

WHEREAS, for generations, the United States and other governmental and religious institutions implemented Indian boarding school policies intended to separate American Indian children from their families, Tribal Nations, languages, cultures, spiritual practices, and traditional ways of life; and

WHEREAS, research from the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition reveals that from 1819 through the 1960s, the federal government funded over 526 boarding schools across 38 states, including 23 boarding schools in Minnesota, removing children as young as 3 years old from their homes and traditional lands; and

WHEREAS, American Indian children from Minnesota’s Tribal Nations and Native communities were taken, sent, or compelled to attend federal, church-operated, and other boarding schools both within Minnesota and throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, many children experienced the loss of their language, identity, family connections, cultural teachings, and spiritual traditions, while others endured neglect, physical and emotional abuse, forced labor, inadequate medical care, and other forms of mistreatment; and

WHEREAS, many American Indian children died while attending boarding schools and never returned to their families or Tribal Nations, and in many instances their burial locations, records, identities, and circumstances of death remain incomplete, unknown, or unresolved; and

WHEREAS, the harms caused by the Indian boarding school system did not end when the schools closed, but continue to affect survivors, families, descendants, and Tribal communities through intergenerational trauma, disrupted kinship systems, language loss, cultural displacement, and the continuing separation of Native children from their communities; and

WHEREAS, despite these policies and harms, American Indian people and Tribal Nations have demonstrated profound strength, resilience, and resistance by preserving and revitalizing Native languages, cultures, ceremonies, kinship systems, traditional knowledge, and systems of Tribal governance; and

WHEREAS, MIAC recognizes that remembrance must center the voices and experiences of boarding school survivors, descendants, families, Tribal Nations, and Native communities, and must proceed with dignity, cultural respect, and recognition of Tribal sovereignty; and

WHEREAS, meaningful remembrance requires more than acknowledgment and should include continued efforts to identify records, locate burial sites, return children and ancestors to their Tribal Nations when requested, preserve survivor testimony, support language and cultural revitalization, and provide culturally responsive resources for survivors and descendants; and

WHEREAS, MIAC recognizes the importance of consultation and collaboration with Minnesota's Tribal Nations regarding boarding school records, burial sites, cultural resources, repatriation, memorialization, education, and other governmental actions related to the legacy of Indian boarding schools; and

WHEREAS, the State of Minnesota has a responsibility to understand and acknowledge the role that government policies and institutions played in the removal, assimilation, and cultural dispossession of American Indian children and to ensure that future governmental actions respect Tribal sovereignty, Native families, and Native cultures; and

WHEREAS, remembrance provides an opportunity to honor those who survived, mourn those who never returned home, recognize the strength of their descendants, and educate future generations regarding this history so that it is neither forgotten nor repeated;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council formally recognizes and honors all American Indian people who attended Indian boarding schools, their families and descendants, and especially the children who died or never returned home; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MIAC remembers and honors the children whose names, burial locations, or circumstances remain unknown and supports Tribal Nations in efforts to identify, locate, document, protect, and, where appropriate and requested by the affected Tribal Nation, repatriate their relatives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MIAC affirms that the history and continuing impacts of Indian boarding schools must be understood within the broader history of federal and state policies directed toward assimilation, dispossession, termination of Tribal cultures, and interference with Tribal sovereignty and Native family systems; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council hereby recognizes September 30 as Indian Boarding School Remembrance Day and encourages the State of Minnesota, state agencies, educational institutions, local governments, and the people of Minnesota to observe September 30 as a day of remembrance, reflection, education, truth-telling, and healing, honoring the survivors of Indian boarding schools, their families and descendants, and the children who never returned home; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MIAC encourages the observance of September 30 in a manner that centers the voices of Tribal Nations, boarding school survivors, descendants, and Native communities, and recognizes the sovereignty, resilience, cultural continuity, and enduring presence of American Indian people in Minnesota.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MIAC supports the preservation of survivor testimony, archival records, Tribal histories, Native languages, cultural teachings, ceremonies, and traditional knowledge as essential components of truth, healing, education, and cultural continuity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MIAC encourages Minnesota state agencies, educational institutions, local governments, historical organizations, faith institutions, and other entities possessing boarding school records or related information to work transparently and respectfully with Tribal Nations to identify, preserve, and provide appropriate access to those materials; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MIAC calls upon state agencies and other governmental entities to engage in meaningful Tribal consultation before taking actions involving boarding school sites, burial locations, records, memorialization efforts, cultural resources, or other matters that may affect Tribal Nations, survivors, descendants, or Native communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MIAC supports culturally responsive and community-directed resources for boarding school survivors and descendants, including behavioral health services, cultural and spiritual healing, family reconnection, language revitalization, education, archival research, and community-based remembrance initiatives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MIAC encourages the people and institutions of Minnesota to observe Indian Boarding School Remembrance as a time for reflection, education, truth-telling, remembrance, and respect for the sovereignty, resilience, and enduring presence of Tribal Nations and Native people; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council commits to carrying forward the memory of the children who were taken, honoring the strength of those who survived, supporting the generations who continue to heal, and ensuring that the history of Indian boarding schools informs Minnesota's continuing responsibility to uphold Tribal sovereignty, protect Native children and families, and advance respectful government-to-government relationships with Tribal Nations.

They are remembered. Their stories matter. Their cultures endure. Their descendants continue.

CERTIFICATION: We do hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly presented and acted upon by a vote of 8 Approve, ___ Opposed, ___ Nonvote/Abstain at a regular meeting of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, a quorum present, held on September 23, 2026, at Grand Portage Nation.

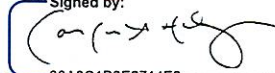
Signed by:



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Robert Deschampe, Chairman
Minnesota Indian Affairs Council

Signed by:



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Carlos Hernandez, Vice Chairman
Minnesota Indian Affairs Council